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C O N F I D E N T I A L HARARE 001351

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NSC FOR SENIOR AFRICA DIRECTOR J. FRAZER
LONDON FOR C. GURNEY
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BANGKOK FOR WIN DAYTON

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/31/2013
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [ASEC](#) [ZI](#) [MDC](#)
SUBJECT: MDC REQUESTS MEETINGS WITH POTUS DELEGATION IN RSA

Classified By: Political Officer Audu Besmer for reasons 1.5 b/d

¶1. (U) This is an action request; please see paragraph two.

Summary and Action Request:

¶2. (C) MDC Presidential Advisor, Gandi Mudzingwa, requested meetings with member(s) of the POTUS delegation at whatever level would be appropriate for an MDC delegation that will be traveling to South Africa soon. Mudzingwa said the main message the MDC would like to convey is that the MDC is open to restarting dialogue with Mugabe, but Mugabe has scuttled all initiatives in this vein. We provisionally recommend a meeting with AS Kansteiner. End Summary and Action Request.

Meetings in RSA Requested

¶3. (C) On July 1 MDC Presidential Advisor, Gandi Mudzingwa, requested meetings at whatever level would be appropriate for an MDC delegation that will be traveling to South Africa for the POTUS visit. MDC Deputy Secretary General, Gift Chimanikire is heading a political delegation that will also include Shadow Minister of Justice, David Coltart, and Secretary for Economic Affairs, Tendai Biti. Paul

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Themba-Nyathi, MDC spokesperson, is also heading a separate public affairs delegation.

Roadmap to Peace?

¶4. (C) Although a June 27 Reuters article reported that the party's President Morgan Tsvangirai said the MDC was developing a "roadmap to peace" to present to the Bush delegation, the following is all that has evolved of this initiative thus far:

¶5. (C) The two sides in Zimbabwe are not talking (this is in response to news reports of Mbeki's comments that ZANU-PF and MDC are talking). The MDC believes that ZANU-PF would like to manage the crisis and buy time and ensure ZANU-PF succession, rather than solve the crisis. Rather than opening up to talks, Mugabe has in fact scuttled various initiatives at restarting dialogue, or played one off the other. The MDC, in contrast, is open to dialogue. Tsvangirai has requested a meeting with the Ambassador for

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July 4 in which Mudzingwa said Tsvangirai plans to deliver the MDC message to us in greater detail.

¶6. (C) Mudzingwa said that domestically, the MDC is looking for a formula to restart negotiations with Mugabe. In response to conflicting reports that the MDC would both support and not support a unity government with the ruling party, Mudzingwa did not clarify adequately. (Note: It is possible the MDC is still working out language / policy on this. End Note.)

Comment:

¶7. (C) It is not yet clear whether the MDC really plans to put forward a roadmap to peace with any reasonable level of detail. So far, their planned pitch to the POTUS delegation remains uncertain. However, we anticipate they will flesh out the plan by July 4, and we would recommend consideration of a meeting with AS Kansteiner. We will report back on the July 4 meeting, including any roadmap specifics that come up. We did not find out from the MDC if they have informed South Africans of their desire to meet with members of the POTUS delegation, and this should be clarified. End Comment.

SULLIVAN